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Chou Says Dag Called 2 Yanks Spies, Denial Made

Editor's Note—This dispatch is from an editor of the newspaper, La Prensa in San Jose, Costa Rica. The writer, visited Communist China on invitation of the Peiping government.

By JULIO C. SUNOL

PEIPING (AP)—Premier Chou En-Lai of Communist China says Dag Hammarskjold told him two men spies. He said Hammarskjold's mission dealt only with the fliers and civilians were not within the scope of his appeal. Nations could not help them win freedom from Communist jails.

Chou in an interview brought up the cases of John Downey, 30, of New Britain, Conn., and Richard Fecteau, 33, of Lynn, Mass. Both were captured during the Korean War and imprisoned as American spies. The U.S. government has denied the charges.

"In this same room I am speaking to you today," Chou said, spoke in January, 1955, with Mr. Dag Hammarskjold, secretary-general of the United Nations. I spoke with him several times. The purpose of his visit was connected with efforts to obtain the release of American pilots that were taken prisoner during the war in Korea.

Fliers Freed

After Hammarskjold's mission to Peiping, 11 fliers were released. Chou said their release, on Aug. 1, 1955, was timed to create a good atmosphere for the Geneva Conference on the Far East.

The 11 fliers, Chou said, "invaded our national airspace and were shot down. Mr. Hammarskjold said they were prisoners of war and not spies."

Then Chou paused and turned to discussion of Downey and Fecteau who were not released.

"Five and a half years have passed since, and I can tell you that Mr. Hammarskjold told me at that time that Downey and his companion were not his official business because they were not pilots of the United States but spies."

Chou continued: "If you see Mr. Hammarskjold in New York, ask him and he will not be able to deny it. He cannot deny it because it is true, and I tell it to you today because 5½ years have passed since then."

Denial At UN

At the United Nations, a Hammarskjold aide denied that the Secretary-General ever called the men spies. He said Hammarskjold's mission dealt only with the fliers and civilians were not within the scope of his appeal.

Downey and Fecteau disappeared on a flight from Korea to Japan in 1952. The Chinese said they were shot down while dropping supplies to U.S. agents there. In 1954, Downey was sentenced to life in prison and Fecteau to 20 years.

In 1957, a former U.S. Information Agency employee in Korea said Downey and Fecteau were employees of the Central Intelligence Agency. In September, 1957, Fecteau was quoted by a group of visiting Americans as saying he had worked for the CIA. The agency declined comment.

Chou continued:

"We have sufficient proof of U.S. espionage and we have captured spies in our territory. If Americans come to China they will be received cordially. But the government of the United States does not permit good American people to come to this country. They only send spy planes."

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